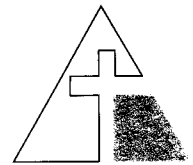


July 17, 1994

Office of Statewide Health Planning and Development
Office of the Director
1600 Ninth Street, Room 433
Sacramento, CA 95814

Attention: David Werdegar, MD, MPH
Director



Little
Company
of Mary
Hospital

4101 Torrance Blvd.
Torrance, CA 90503
(310) 540-7676

Dear Dr. Werdegar,

Little Company of Mary Health Services is governed by our mission to deliver the highest quality of care. We respect the patient as an individual and their entitlement to information available to make an informed decision about the hospital they choose. We feel the OSHPD California Hospital Outcomes Project is a process that helps to support this objective.

As many other hospitals had mentioned two years ago, there are limitations of this analysis in describing the quality of care given at hospitals. These include limitations in the patient data being collected and submitted including the lack of the physiologic status of the patient on admission, conditions present on admission versus those that develop later, as well as a lack of information on quality of life and patient satisfaction. In addition, the ICD-9-CM coding issues are many. The quality, including specificity of codes and interpretation of documentation, varies across hospitals. Physician documentation of comorbidities may be lacking especially in the case of elective diskectomies.

This analysis could be strengthened by validating the data that is submitted before the analysis is undertaken. An alternative to this would be to provide the hospitals with the models used before the data is collected. This would allow the hospitals to work with their medical staffs in documenting those conditions which may impact the risk-adjustment. At LCMHS, we participate in several outcome projects where the risk adjustment models are used to improve our documentation and accurately risk-adjust our patient population.

We are proud of the quality care given at LCMHS and we support all efforts directed at accurately identifying quality medical care.

Very truly yours,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Mark Costa". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large, stylized "M" and "C".

Mark Costa
President, Little Company of Mary Hospital